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ABSTRACT

An independent evaluation of the Career Explorations program found it to be worthy of both continuation and replication. Career Explorations is a summer youth program operated by Hunter College (New York) in cooperation with The Coalition of 100 Black Women, and supported by The Commonwealth Fund. Its aim is to help minority New York City high school students expand their knowledge of career options and educational opportunities, particularly in health science and technology. Participants are neither academically gifted nor educationally disadvantaged. Strategies include the following: (1) meaningful work experience; (2) close relationships with mentors, supervisors, and other adults; and (3) participation in educational seminars. Program successes included the following: (1) reaching its target audience; (2) a 97 percent completion rate; and (3) a high level of participant satisfaction. Factors contributing to success included the following: (1) committed staff and leadership; (2) identification with Hunter College and the Coalition; (3) focus on meeting the needs of youth; (4) emphasis on adult youth relationships; and (5) capacity to help participating organizations meet some of their needs. Problems faced by the program can be attributed to its complexity and sometimes confusing goals. Statistical data are included on 16 tables. (FMW)

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CAREER EXPLORATIONS:

THE PROGRAM AND MANAGEMENT REPORT

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ABSTRACT

Career Explorations is an enriched summer youth program, operated by Hunter College in cooperation with The Coalition of 100 Black Women. Supported by The Commonwealth Fund, the program aims to help minority youth expand their knowledge of career options and educational opportunities particularly in health, science, and technology, through the following program strategies: meaningful work experience; an emphasis on relationships with mentors, supervisors and other adults who provide support and assistance; and participation in educational seminars. Each summer since 1982, the program has served 200 youth who have successfully completed their junior year in four New York City high schools. The students recruited are neither the academically gifted nor the educationally disadvantaged -- a target group rarely served by special programs.

Public/Private Ventures (P/PV) conducted an evaluation of Career Explorations '84 in order to describe and assess its management and outcomes and to consider its prospects for replicability. P/PV found that the program exhibited an unusually strong focus on youth needs and provided youth with high quality work experiences. The following outcomes were also achieved: The program successfully reached its targeted population, had a very high completion rate (97%), and generated a high level of youth satisfaction. Youth received a substantial amount of guidance and attention from adults. There is evidence of promising gains for the participants, including increased awareness of career options, requirements of the work world, and educational opportunities. A large number of youth reported consideration of alternative career plans. However, not all the program objectives for the summer were fully met. Some jobs were not satisfying; the concept of "mentoring" originally envisioned by program designers continues to be hard to implement; and some of the specific objectives for career awareness were not achieved.

Overall, the program was very impressive, and the following factors were viewed as contributing to its success: commited staff and leadership; the program's identification with Hunter College and with the Coalition; a strong focus on meeting the needs of youth; recognition of the importance of strong adult/youth relationships; and the capacity to help participating organizations meet some of their needs. Program factors needing improvement include: defining the behaviors expected of mentors; matching youth to jobs; and planning educational seminars that will engage youth. Many of the problems faced can be attributed to the program's complexity and its sometimes confusing goals. It has also set expectations that may not be achievable in a six-week program. Nonetheless, the program has gone far beyond most summer programs in recognizing the need for multiple strategies to help youth. It is our assessment that the program is both worthy of continuation and worthy of replication.

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Chapter One: Introduction

This report describes and assesses the management and outcomes of Career Explorations '84, a program operated by Hunter College of the City University of New York in cooperation with The Coalition of 100 Black Women. Supported by The Commonwealth Fund, this program is designed "to expand the perceptions of minority students about the options available to them in choosing a career in health, science and various technological fields, in an environment that will facilitate their attainment of the education and training needed to achieve such career objectives." (Hunter College, Career Explorations '84 Proposal)

A six-week summer program, Career Explorations has been in operation since 1982. Each year it has been aimed at 200 youth who have completed the junior year in high school and who are neither academically gifted nor educationally disadvantaged. Sponsors believed that a carefully designed program could have a profound effect on this group of youth, who are rarely targeted by other summer programs. In 1984, the program changed its orientation from a broad look at career options to a more specific focus on health, science, and technology careers.

To achieve its overall goal of career exploration, the program employs several program strategies -- work experiences, educational seminars, and support and assistance to youth from mentors, supervisors and other adults. These strategies are jointly intended to meet the following objectives for youth:

- o increased awareness and knowledge about careers particularly in health, science and technology;
- o knowledge about the work world; and

- increased educational and career aspirations.

Career Explorations has generated considerable interest among other potential sponsors who are considering replicating the program. Accordingly, in the Spring of 1984, The Commonwealth Fund asked Public Private Ventures (P/PV) to evaluate the program and address the issue of its prospects for replication. This report on the '84 program does not discuss replicability directly, but will be followed by a replication manual, designed for planners and practitioners who may wish to implement all or part of the program model.

This report will assess Career Explorations '84 by answering the following questions:

- To what extent did the program reach and serve the targeted population?
- How effectively did it implement the various program components?
- Were the program's objectives achieved?
- What are the principal strengths and weaknesses of the program?
- How can the program be improved?

A special feature of the program is the importance it places on adult-youth relationships by providing a mentor for each youth. The program designers envisioned the mentors to be different from other adult role models in the program. The mentor was to be a successful, sensitive person, preferably from the same ethnic or racial background as the youth, who would help stimulate aspirations and inspire new efforts on the part of the young person. The attempt to translate this vague concept into reality has not been fully realized and has been a limitation of the program. Thus a major question that the study addresses is

the viability of developing such a role in a six week program.

The limitations of this research should also be noted. The report does not include an analysis of the program's long-term impact on participating youth. This assessment of the program's effectiveness addresses the apparent effect on youth by the end of the six-week program and is based only on site observations and quantitative assessments gathered by the end of the summer of 1984.

The information presented in this report results from the following research procedures:

- review of program documents from prior years and those relating to the summer of '84 program;
- interviews with the key actors in the '84 program including all project staff; the President of Hunter College; the President of the New York City chapter of The Coalition of 100 Black Women; The Commonwealth Fund Project Officer; several project staff from prior years; a sample of mentors, worksite supervisors, and students; and administrative or counseling staff of the four high schools from which youth have been recruited to the program;
- analysis of questionnaires completed by youth participants at the beginning and end of the program and of questionnaires completed by a sample of supervisors and mentors;
- observation and interviews at a sample of the work placements;
- observation at project events, including staff-training sessions, orientation meetings for mentors and supervisors, a sample of the educational seminars and small group sessions, and project staff meetings; and
- comparison with other summer youth employment programs which P/PV has studied previously.

Career Explorations is an ambitious program with multiple objectives and expectations for its participants. This research

team wishes to acknowledge at the outset a central quandary associated with its evaluation: measured against its multiple objectives, the program was only moderately successful. But, when viewed in the spectrum of other summer training programs observed by P/PV, Career Explorations is very impressive, demonstrating an unusally high degree of orientation to youth as client, providing high quality work experience and supervision, and exhibiting a high degree of staff commitment.

The remainder of this report is organized as follows:

- Chapter Two describes the program more specifically, examining how it is organized to achieve its goals, reviewing its context and history, and discussing the implications of that history for the current status of the program.
- Chapter Three outlines the process by which the target population of youth was recruited to the program, describes the characteristics of youth who participated, and assesses the recruitment process and its outcomes.
- Chapter Four discusses the work component, including the process by which job placements were located, the nature and quality of the jobs, and an assessment of the job experiences.
- Chapter Five characterizes the mentor component, as well as other adult support provided to youth, and assesses that key program feature.
- Chapter Six reviews the educational component and its outcomes.
- Chapter Seven describes the management of the program, its staff, and the costs associated with program operations.
- Chapter Eight summarizes the outcomes, reviews the strengths and weaknesses of the program, and offers some recommendations for program improvement.

Chapter Two: Program Design, Context, and History

This chapter describes the principal features of Career Explorations, the evolution of the program, and its organizational structure.

Career Explorations '84: Program Design

The program is operated with the cooperation of Hunter College, The Coalition of 100 Black Women, The Commonwealth Fund, the New York City public schools, and organizations and businesses that provide summer jobs for participants. Principal components of the program include:

- well-supervised, meaningful work experience, four full days a week for the six weeks of the program, primarily in organizations conducting work in health, science, and technology;
- assignment of youth to a mentor who can serve as a role model through his or her own successful career development and success;
- educational seminars and small group sessions in a college setting one day a week, during which presentations are made on career and education options and related topics; and
- assignment of youth to a Field Supervisor, who conducts weekly small group sessions for no more than 25 youth and who provides support, information, and counseling.

Participants are recruited from four comprehensive high schools which have a high proportion of minority and low-income youth. To be eligible, students must be receiving passing grades in school and have good attendance records. (A more detailed description of youth characteristics is provided in Chapter 3).

Participants who complete the program receive a certificate

and letters of recommendation, and are guaranteed admission to Hunter College if they graduate from high school. They also receive a weekly stipend of $100 for their work and attendance at seminars for the six weeks of the program. This stipend is paid by The Commonwealth Fund, not by the agencies where the youth work. The stipend is less than minimum wage would be for the number of hours participants spend in the program. Nonetheless, it is more than youth typically earn in the federally-funded Summer Youth Employment and Training Program (SYETP), in which employment often amounts to only 20 hours a week. Furthermore, the $100 is not taxed because it represents a stipend, rather than a wage.

Both the program design and the roles of the principal actors have evolved since the program's inception in 1982. The 1984 program reflects some of the program's strengths that have been tried and tested and are currently working well. It also reflects some new program features and alterations which have not yet withstood the test of time. Therefore, an understanding of the program's history is necessary for an accurate assessment of its current operations.

Context and History

Career Explorations was originally conceived and planned through the efforts of an informal network. In this case, the network consisted of the President of Hunter College, the President of The Coalition of 100 Black Women, and the Director of The Commonwealth Fund. Each had her own institutional interests which she wanted to further and had been looking for an opportunity to come together in an effort that merged their interests.

For example, Hunter College is part of an urban public university, the City University of New York (CUNY). Its president and other leaders subscribe to the belief that a public

university has a responsibility to provide service to the community. The college was also interested in increasing its applicant pool.

At the same time, The Coalition of 100 Black Women and The Commonwealth Fund shared an interest in the concept of mentoring and its potential to influence young minority students to raise their level of aspirations and achievements. Mentoring became a primary component of the program and has remained so through its three-year history, although it has taken a different form than originally envisioned.

The issue around which Hunter, the Coalition, and The Commonwealth Fund finally came together was both their own and public concern about the high rate of youth unemployment in New York City, particularly among minority teenagers. They conceived the idea of an enriched summer jobs program. Youth would be placed in jobs that would enable them to engage in career exploration, as well as earn money and gain general preparation for the world of work. The program would include an educational component, focused on career and educational goals and another key feature -- the assignment of a mentor to each participant.

The program was funded by The Commonwealth Fund in the spring of 1982. The funding subsidized the stipends of the youth, who were called interns, as well as covering program and administrative costs. It was administered out of the office of the President of Hunter College, who was the official Program Director. Faculty from Hunter College were recruited to staff some of the project positions.

The representative of The Coalition of 100 Black Women (now the chapter President) was released from her job in the Governor's office to work full-time on the development and implementation of Career Explorations in the spring and summer of 1982. She assumed responsibility for recruiting mentors and

identifying job sites for the program, largely from members of the Coalition. She designed the student handbook, which describes the goals of the program, its procedures and rules, the role of key actors in the program, and provides other pertinent information.

Under very tight timelines, the staff recruited 200 youth and identified a sufficient number of job placements in a variety of business, professional, and non-profit agencies. The only restrictions on the kinds of job sites acceptable to the program were that they provide youth with meaningful work and good supervision. Staff also succeeded in recruiting mentors or supervisors, in designing a curriculum for seminars, and in implementing the program. As reported in the evaluation of the 1982 program, these efforts led to very high completion and satisfaction rates.

In 1983, its second year, the program's early management suffered by comparison. A more complex evaluation was designed, which required that youth be assigned randomly to participant and control groups. To implement the design, the evaluation team at Hunter College was involved in student recruitment and faced some unanticipated problems in drawing the sample, resulting in a shortfall of over 50 students on the first day of the program.

Job development also fell behind schedule, in part because The Commonwealth Fund asked employers to share the cost of the interns' stipends. Employers were unwilling, and by late May the attempt was abandoned. Further, the participation of The Coalition of 100 Black Women in job development was sharply diminished because of competing demands on them, resulting in an inadequate supply of job placements by the opening day of the program.

All of these problems were solved during the first week of the program by massive staff effort, including that of the new

Program Manager (who is still in that role). But these problems caused the Hunter College to reassess the organization of the project as planning began for 1984.

Despite these problems in '83, the program also implemented some positive changes in response to the '82 experience. These included strengthening the weekly seminars by building a course sequence for specific aspects of educational and career planning. In addition, the program staff attempted to define more clearly the mentor role, to provide orientation for mentors, and to promote the continuation of the mentor/student relationship during the school year (a feature which did not really succeed).

One of the strongest and most effective changes, however, was making the job of project manager a year-round position. Most summer programs suffer from the lack of such continuing attention. By supporting a year-round manager, Career Explorations aims to avoid some of the problems associated with shutdown and startup that plagued it earlier and that are common to similar programs.

Program Modifications for Career Explorations '84

In planning for 1984, Hunter College felt the need to give the program more focus and to align the program more closely to Hunter's institutional goals. The College was assuming more and more of the financial and administrative burden, including the costs of program staff. While The Commonwealth Fund would continue to subsidize the interns' stipends and a substantial portion of the salary of the year-round Program Manager, it was reducing its overall funding. The role of the Coalition in the program was changing as well. While it continued as a co-sponsor and made valuable contributions to the program, its representative no longer actively "staffed" the project as she had the first year.

Hunter's concern about the program's fit with its own goals coincided with an increasing awareness that the program should focus on a more specific set of careers. A large majority of the students in 1982 and 1983 had expressed interest in careers in health, science, and computer technology. Also, a consideration of the future employment market in New York City by Hunter College indicated that job opportunities would be greatest in health-related and technological positions.

A narrowing in focus to promote exploration of careers in health, science, and technology helped Hunter find a place for the program within the School of Health Sciences. Since minorities are under-represented in the health sciences, the School was particularly interested in increasing minority enrollment. The Dean of the School saw the program as one way to encourage an increase in minority applicants. At the same time, the School could strengthen the summer program because of its strong contacts and extensive experience in placing student interns (undergraduate and graduate) in health care and health-related institutions.

The major modifications for the Career Explorations '84 program were thus two-fold. Emphasis shifted from general career exploration and placements in a wide range of occupations to a focus primarily on health-related, science, and technology fields. Second, the program's new alliance with the School of Health Sciences tied it administratively to a specific part of the College, requiring a move from the main campus to a branch in a different part of the city. These changes, accompanied by the hiring of some new key personnel (e.g., a new Program Director), created opportunities for new work placements and new mentors and supervisors.

The program continues to maintain its components of work experience, mentoring relationships, and educational seminars. While the emphasis on providing support to youth through a

variety of adult/youth relationships continues, the distinction between mentor and supervisor remains vague, and the mentor's role in the context of a program such as this continues to be elusive. However, attention was given to strengthening the educational seminars for the '84 program. With the new emphasis on health, science, and technology, there is now a strong interest in imparting specific information and in encouraging particular career choices.

Given these changes, it is important that Career Explorations not be viewed as a straight continuation of its predecessor program. While it exhibits characteristics of a mature program that has solved some of its administrative and programmatic problems, it also has some elements of a new program. Some of the new features have yet to be worked out fully, which necessarily affects the degree to which the program can achieve its goals. This is both a help and a hindrance in considering the program's replicability. One can learn about the problems associated with mid-stream modifications, but we cannot thoroughly assess which key features are essential to success if their implementation is still in a trial stage.

Organizational Structure

This section describes the organizations that were involved in Career Explorations '84, and their roles in the program:

The primary operating agency for the 1984 program was the Hunter College School of Health Sciences. The program staff and their roles were as follows:

- the official Program Director of the '84 program was the Chairperson of the Department of Community Health Education. New to the program in 1984, he was paid a one-month summer stipend by the City University. His duties were to oversee and guide the program, provide supervision and support to the Program Manager, and to serve as the official liaison to the President of

Hunter College and to The Commonwealth Fund.

- The Program Manager carried out the day-to-day management of the program. Her position, the only year-round one on the program, is funded 75 percent by The Commonwealth Fund and 25 percent by the College (which she also assists during the academic year in the admissions office). She supervises or carries out all aspects of the program including the recruitment of youth, staff and mentors, job placement, program planning, and youth follow-up. Her administrative activities include arranging payment to students and staff, contracting for insurance, ordering supplies, etc. The Program Manager has worked with the program since the spring of 1983.

- A Program Consultant, an adjunct faculty member at Hunter College, designed and provided training to the project field staff and worked with the Program Manager in program planning and in recruiting students. She was paid as a ten-day consultant by Hunter College through its summer budget.

- Eight Field Supervisors, mostly graduate students with youth counseling experience, worked on the project for eight weeks in "counselor/guidance/ supervisor" roles. Each was assigned 25 students. They conducted weekly educational sessions with their students, reviewed journals that the interns were encouraged to write, reviewed problems, counseled, kept records on the students, visited the worksites, monitored time sheets and distributed checks, and served in a number of other roles vis-a-vis the students, the program, and the worksite supervisors and mentors. These positions were paid by the College.

- The project also had a Secretary/Administrative Assistant for the summer and the services of a work/study student from the President's office, an "alumnus" of the program's first year who is now a student at Hunter College.

The Coalition of 100 Black Women is the co-sponsor of Career Explorations. An organization of black professional and business women, the Coalition's New York chapter currently numbers 700. One of its interests is to provide assistance to minority youth through various special programs in which members volunteer to serve as mentors, role models, and in other "big sister" type

roles. For the 1984 program, the President of the New York chapter, who has been involved since the program's inception, committed the organization to providing 50 mentors, assisting in mentor/supervisor training and orientation, and participating in program planning, particularly by recruiting speakers for the six Monday educational seminars.

The Commonwealth Fund has played a key role in the design of the program and currently provides the funds for the stipends of the 200 interns and for 75 percent of the Program Manager's salary. The Fund has also provided funding for the program evaluation, and for the Replication Manual which will follow.

Four New York City public schools are the sources from which the students have been recruited into the program. Three were chosen in cooperation with the school district; the fourth, located close to the main campus of Hunter College, was chosen because of the College's desire to serve a school in its own neighborhood. Principals and/or guidance counselors have played active roles in recruiting students for the program, administering applications and cooperating with post-program follow-up.

A group of organizations comprise the final element that makes Career Explorations possible. These are businesses, social service agencies, hospitals and health centers, laboratories and others that accept students in job placements and provide volunteer job supervisors and mentors from their staffs. These individuals support, guide, train, and supervise participating youth. While the agencies do not pay the interns for their work, significant in-kind contributions are expected, especially the donation of the supervisors' and mentors' time.

Chapter Three: Reaching the Target Population

The target youth for Career Explorations are the mid-range students -- not the best and not the worst -- a population that is not often served by special programs. The program is not aimed specifically at economically disadvantaged youth, but the four high schools that participated in 1984 -- Julia Richman in Manhattan, Taft in the Bronx, Prospect Heights in Brooklyn, and Andrew Jackson in Queens -- have high concentrations of minority and low-income youth. It is therefore assumed that many of the participants will be from low-income families.

The program attempted to recruit its target population with the assistance of staff in each of the high schools. Managing recruiting in this way yielded a large number of applicants but also resulted in some problems. To determine whether Career Explorations '84 was successful in reaching its target population, and to help improve the recruitment effort, this chapter describes the following:

- the process by which youth were recruited;
- the characteristics of youth who participated in the program;
- the incentives youth were offered and the orientation process; and
- an assessment of the recruitment process.

The Recruitment Process

The student recruitment process for Career Explorations is decentralized, and all four of the participating high schools have been responsible for selecting the students since the first year of the program. In 1984, the Program Manager and/or faculty consultant contacted each school in April and reviewed the goals

and parameters of the program with a school administrator or designated guidance counselor.

The program staff specified that students were eligible if they were completing their junior year, needed a job, were receiving passing grades, and had a good attendance record. In 1984, students were also required to have completed at least one year of math and science because of the new emphasis on careers in health, science, and technology. Students who needed to attend summer school were ineligible, further limiting the applicant pool. Students were not, however, required to have identified career interest in these fields. Program staff believed that this would be an unrealistic demand in the four target schools, since none had particularly strong science or math programs.

For the '84 program, each school was asked to recruit 60 applicants, 50 plus 10 alternates, toward an enrollment goal of 200. Applications were delivered to the schools at the beginning of May, for return to the Career Explorations office by May 31.

The initial contact in each school was the principal, but after that, each school handled the recruitment process somewhat differently.

In two of the schools, the eleventh grade guidance counselors made an effort to find students with career interests in health, science, and technology, generated lists of eligible students, distributed applications to them, and invited them to apply. In neither school was there an open announcement of the program. One of the two schools, Julia Richman, has a health careers program of its own that includes summer internships, which limited the pool of potential applicants to Career Explorations.

At a third school, Andrew Jackson, recruitment for Career Explorations '84 was not originally separate from that for other

summer programs. However, the Guidance Director asked for names of students who were perceived to have certain qualities including "curiosity and a sense of commitment." She interviewed all applicants and spoke with them as a group. Altogether, she said she met with them seven times. Interestingly, Andrew Jackson yielded the largest number of applicants and participants. However, this may be due to reasons other than the intensity of the recruitment process. Andrew Jackson is the most isolated of the four schools that participate in the program, and, according to administrators at the school, its students have fewer opportunities and special programs than at the other schools. Further, the school's principal is an active member of The Coalition of 100 Black Women and is a strong advocate of the program.

Less information was available about the fourth school since the relevant administrator was not present when our interviews were conducted in the fall. In no case did the program staff of Career Explorations have direct contact with students in the schools during the recruitment and selection process.

The Selection and Notification Process

Career Explorations staff obtained applications from all four schools by May 31. In total, 221 applications were received, short of the 240 requested. The program staff sent letters to 200 students in the third week of June, inviting them to attend the opening of the program on July 9, and to indicate their continuing interest and availability. This is a relatively late notification for a summer youth program (although not late by public program standards), and may have contributed to difficulty in filling the slots. In all four schools, there was a reduction in the applicant pool, as students appeared to be "shopping around" for summer activities.

By the last week of June, the program staff turned to the

waiting list. Attrition, however, was even greater than anticipated, and despite the attempt to oversubscribe the program by requesting 10 extra applications from each school, only 166 students showed up on the first day. The Program Manager had to return to the schools to enlist additional students to fill the remaining 34 places plus two more created when students dropped out during the first week of the program. With a larger waiting list, this last-minute search might have been avoided.

Participants had their first face-to-face contact with the program at an orientation session held on the opening day, July 9. The program was formally introduced in a large group session at the Hunter College School of Health Sciences and again in small group sessions with the Field Supervisors. In these small group sessions, rules and regulations were reviewed and work placements were assigned. The actual work began on the following day when the interns reported to their assigned worksites. Of the 202 who began, 195 students successfully completed the program.

Characteristics of Participating Youth

This section focuses on youth who were involved in the '84 program, and the extent to which they were different from those who are typically served by subsidized summer job programs. Youth are described in terms of their demographic characteristics, educational and prior work experience, future plans at the beginning of the program, and reasons for participating.

Demographic characteristics. The demographic characteristics of the participants (distributions on sex, race/ethnicity, family sources of income, and type of household) are summarized in Table 3-1. Overall, two-thirds of the students were female and one-third male. Taft High School had the highest proportion (40 percent) of male participants. The program is not specifically

TABLE 3-1

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE STUDENT POPULATION
(N=200*)

Sex	Percentage of those responding
Female	67
Male	33
Ethnicity	
Black	78
Hispanic	10
White	3
Other (includes Asian-American and American Indian)	9
Household Composition	
Two parents	37
Mother only	45
Father only	2
Other	16
Primary Source of Household Income	
Employment	72
Public Assistance	14
SSI	6
Unemployment Insurance	2
Other	6

*The number answering each question varies. The percentage is based on valid responses per question.

targeted to females, but the high percentage of female participation may have been a result of the involvement of The Coalition of 100 Black Women.

This uneven distribution of males and females has been fairly consistent all three years of the program. It is interesting to note that most publicly supported summer youth employment programs tend to attract a more equal distribution of males and females. Nonetheless, there are exceptions: P/PV recently evaluated a private-sector program in another city which was targeted to the strongest applicants to the citywide public-sector program. This program also attracted twice as many females as males.

The ethnicity of the participants in Career Explorations '84 demonstrates the program's success in reaching minority youth. Seventy-eight percent were black; 10 percent, Hispanic; 9 percent, Asian-American, American Indian, or other; and 3 percent, white. This distribution varied by schools, representing the demographics of the local school population, and is very similar to the distribution in past years. Andrew Jackson had the largest percent black (95 percent) and Taft had the most diverse population.

Slightly more than one-third of the students (37 percent) reported that they lived with two parents; 45 percent lived with their mother only, and 2 percent with their father only. This is not a surprising distribution for a largely inner-city, minority youth population.

Seventy-three percent of the participants' households received their primary income from employment. Fourteen percent of the youth came from households where the primary source of income was Public Assistance and nine percent from Supplemental Security Income or Unemployment Insurance. The indices of economic status are not the same in all four schools, however.

One school, Taft, has a noticeably higher percentage of students whose families receive Public Assistance. The percentage of households with their primary source of income from employment is higher than that of the average summer youth employment population, suggesting that participants in Career Explorations are not as economically disadvantaged as those normally served by federally - funded summer jobs programs.

Fifty-eight percent of the students reported that they received free or reduced-price lunches in school. Information from the schools indicates that only about 30 percent of all the students participate in the school lunch program. Thus, it appears that even though there were no income eligibility criteria for the program, it did attract students somewhat poorer than the school population.

Overall, the degree of stability, both personal and financial, that these students appeared to enjoy at home contrasts with the situation typical of participants in many other summer youth employment programs. Almost three-quarters of the Career Explorations students live with someone who works regularly and provides a model of the behavior necessary to obtain and keep a job.

Prior work experience and education. For a large number of students, Career Explorations represented their first work experience. About half of the students had worked for pay prior to the summer of 1984. In one school, Julia Richman, the proportion reached two-thirds, perhaps reflecting the fact that the school is located in Manhattan, where there are more job opportunities than in the other boroughs. Twenty-nine percent of the participants had some volunteer experience, with the lowest volunteerism in the Brooklyn school, Prospect Heights.

To be eligible for the program, students were required to have completed a year of science and math. Seventy-five percent

of the students had completed a course in biology; 75 percent, a course in algebra; and over 50 percent, a general science course. Thirty-six percent had completed geometry; and 28 percent, a year of chemistry. Two-thirds of the students indicated that they had taken three or more math or science courses.

Fewer students reported that they took part in special programs within their schools. However, 23 percent of the students reported participation in an honors program, and 34 percent in a program called College Bound, suggesting that the program attracts some students who are above average. Twelve percent reported participation in a health careers program, and 8 percent in a nursing program.

Future plans. All but two of the students indicated on their application forms that they intended to graduate from high school. One hundred and seventy-one (85%) of the students planned to continue their education after high school, either full-time or part-time (see Table 3-2). Two-thirds said they planned to attend a four-year college. One-third also planned to work part-time to help finance their education. Thus, evidence from the survey suggests that this population of students is oriented from the outset to continue their education in some kind of post-secondary institution. However, based on the questions they asked in the Monday educational seminars and based on some responses to the questionnaires, they are largely unclear about their future plans and lack knowledge about the mechanics of applying to college and seeking financial aid.

Less than one-third reported that they talked to a guidance counselor regularly about their educational and career plans (Table 3-3). A mere 12 percent of the students talked to a teacher, and only two-thirds said they even talked regularly to parents or other adult relatives about future plans. Thus, the program appears to be addressing a real need to provide the students with access to guidance on educational and career

TABLE 3-2
FUTURE PLANS OF STUDENTS
(N=200)

Plans after high school	Percentage* of students
Get a job full-time	9
Get a job part-time	34
Go to school full-time	66
Go to school part-time	20
Join the military	9
Raise a family	2
Other	1

*Total is greater than 100 percent because student could check more than one response.

For those intending further education, type of school	Percentage of students
Commercial, technical, trade	7
Two-year college	12
Four-year college	69
Don't know	8
Other	4

TABLE 3-3
PERSONS WITH WHOM STUDENTS TALK
REGULARLY ABOUT FUTURE PLANS
(N=200)

Type of Person	Percentage* of Students
Parent or adult relative	61
Guidance counselor	35
Teacher	12
Preacher or minister	1
Boss	5
Friend	22
Brother or sister	17
Other	3

*Total is greater than 100% because students could check more than one response.

options.

Students were asked to indicate their career preferences on the application form, which listed many choices. Twenty-five percent checked some form of health-care work as their first choice. Almost 30 percent checked categories related to science and technology careers, yielding a combination of 55 percent who expressed primary interest in health, science, or technology careers. Twenty-three percent indicated their first choices as clerical, banking, insurance, and accounting. This distribution reflects the fact that the recruitment effort did not exclude students with career interest in areas outside the program's focus.

Reasons for participating. Incentives offered to students for participation in the Career Explorations program included meaningful paid jobs, the educational program, and guaranteed admission to Hunter College. When students were asked to check all their reasons for applying to the program, the opportunity to gain some work experience was the most often cited. When students were asked to place their reasons in order of importance, work experience was also ranked first by 45 percent (See Table 3-4). The second most cited reason was the desire to learn about career opportunities, while the desire to earn money ranked only third. This contrasts with other summer employment programs where youth most often cite the desire to earn money as the primary incentive for participation. Although the desire for a job was the major incentive for this program's participants the additional responses suggest that their interest in exploring careers coincided well with the program's goals.

Administrators in three of the four schools thought that guaranteed admission to Hunter College was a major incentive. This turned out to be the reason cited least by students. Thirteen percent of the students claimed it was a reason to participate, but only 2 percent said it was the most important

TABLE 3-4
REASONS FOR APPLYING TO PROGRAM
(N=200)

	Cited As Most Important Reason	Cited Among All Reasons Given
	%	%
Gain work experience	45	90
Learn more about career opportunities	35	71
Earn some money	15	65
Meet new people	3	19
Gain admission to Hunter College	2	13
	100%	

reason. Only the vice principal at Andrew Jackson was fully aware that an opportunity to gain work experience or the pressing need for a summer job was the major incentive for the students; in fact, students in that school cited this reason more frequently than the others. The low level of interest in Hunter College's guaranteed admission may reflect the fact that, as juniors in high school, the students were not yet thinking about the college admission process, even though so many said they planned to go on to a four-year college.

Assessment of the Recruitment Process and its Outcomes

To evaluate the process, administrators were asked to assess whether they had been given enough information about the program and if they had any difficulty with their role in the recruitment process. Although most school administrators felt that they had been given enough information about the program, it is unclear whether all of the program parameters were appropriately communicated to the actual recruiters, since some of the students did not seem fully aware of the program's focus.

None of the administrators complained about their role, but instead commented on their appreciation of the program. All of the administrators interviewed expressed praise for the program and appreciation for the opportunities it made available to youth. Three particularly appreciated its targeting to the "middle" group of students, citing many programs available for honors students on the one hand, and others for the more disadvantaged students on the other. One school administrator noted that the science and math requirement, combined with an overall achievement level precluding the mandatory summer school, automatically made this a selective program with strong academic requirements.

But, there is substantial evidence to suggest that the program was indeed reaching the population it intended to reach.

Youth served by the program were largely "middle range," many were low-income, and almost all were minority. Further, they seemed to understand the program goals (or at least the goals coincided with many of their own interests), since most mentioned that their primary motivation was to gain work experience and explore careers.

Nonetheless, as the program progressed, it became evident that many of the participants were not altogether aware of what would be expected of them and of what the program offered. For example, some expected the jobs to be more technical than many turned out to be. Others were resistant to the Monday educational seminars and were unaware that they would be required to participate. Possibly, some of these problems could be redressed if program staff were more involved in the recruitment process, simply by making group presentations to applicants or potential applicants.

Another problem in the recruitment process was the timing. Notification of acceptance to the program in mid-June probably contributed significantly to the attrition of the applicant pool. Career Explorations was attempting to recruit a population that is in need of a job and relatively industrious, even if not necessarily the most achievement-oriented in their schools. Such a group would be likely to seek several options for a summer job or program, and it is not surprising that by the third week in June a significant number were no longer interested or available. To ensure adequate enrollment, program staff should attempt to recruit more than ten extra applicants per school, as it did this year; it would be useful to enlist as many as 25 additional applications. However, early acceptance and notification and oversubscribing would not entirely eliminate the attrition problem; a certain number of "no-shows" are probably unavoidable and intermittent reminders and communication with selected interns would still be needed.

Chapter Four: Job Placements and Work Experience

One of the three main components of Career Explorations is the work experience. The program places youth in jobs four days a week for the six weeks of the program. Like many other summer jobs programs, Career Explorations expects that this work experience will enable youth to earn money, learn good work habits, and gain a better sense of the work world. Career Explorations '84, however, also sought jobs for participants that would help them gain a new awareness of educational and career opportunities, particularly in health, science, and technological fields. Thus, while the program staff were aware that the jobs would primarily be entry-level or clerical, they pursued work environments in which the interns could gain knowledge about careers, skills, and, most importantly, supervision and guidance from an adult mentor.

This chapter describes the work component of the program, focusing on:

- the recruitment of job placements;
- the matching of youth to jobs and to mentors;
- the nature and quality of the jobs assigned to the youth; and
- assessments of the job component.

Recruiting and Locating Job Placements

Career Explorations '84 required a number of new job placements because of its new emphasis on health, science and technology careers. Many of the members of The Coalition of 100 Black Women who had formerly acted as mentors and had provided jobs did not work in those fields.

The Program Manager located job placements through a variety of sources: from resources within the School of Health Sciences, from the Hunter College science departments, and some from prior years' placements. The Program Director put the Program Manager in contact with counselors in the School of Health Sciences, who coordinated field placements for undergraduates in the college. They provided referrals for potential placements in health-related work settings with people who were accustomed to supervising students. She reported that 99 percent of those referrals either employed at least one Career Explorations student or recommended another setting that she could contact. The Director also provided her with contacts from his professional organization. Placements from previous years that had been in health-related agencies or that fit the categories of science and technology continued to accept students.

Some other placements from previous years were retained even though they were not directly relevant to the new focus. In some cases, the mentors were particularly effective and too valuable to be lost to the program. In others, the organization (e.g. a city councilman's office) was planning to deal with health policy issues, and these were considered relevant to the program focus. Still others were retained for "back-up" if some placements didn't work out, if some interns were definitely not interested in health or science, or if insufficient placements of high quality in health, science or technology were located.

In addition, Con Edison, which had accepted students in 1982 but had been unable to do so in 1983 due to internal problems, contacted the Coalition requesting a large number of students for 1984. The program placed interns in engineering and data-processing departments. It also held Con Edison in reserve for additional placements it needed.

In the process of locating jobs, the Program Manager also enlisted mentors at the new sites. She described the program

goals, emphasizing the importance of personal attention and of providing guidance to participants in advancing their career and educational plans. The new mentors agreed to supervise the work of the interns or to assign someone else the supervisory role.

The process of locating jobs took place in April, May and June. The endorsement of Hunter College, The Coalition of 100 Black Women, and The Commonwealth Fund contributed greatly to the Program Manager's success in enlisting a sufficient number of job placements and mentors, as well as a reserve list largely from the previous year, to meet the placement needs prior to program opening.

Matching of Youth to Jobs

For most summer youth programs which include a job placement, the matching of youth to jobs represents a major challenge which is often unsuccessfully met. For Career Explorations job placement was a particular challenge since providing a job per se was not the primary goal of the program. The job placement was to serve also as a way for the student to learn about careers and to work with a mentor. Yet neither the time nor the mechanisms were available for an extensive matching process.

In the Career Explorations matching process, neither the student nor the work provider was directly involved in placement. Worksite supervisors did not interview youth, as would have occurred if the company were paying the youth directly. Nor did time allow the Program Manager, who had primary responsiblity for assigning students to jobs, to interview individual participants. She and her staff relied on information provided on the youth's application. They were particularly attentive to information regarding participants' choice of careers; prior paid work or volunteer experience; and the kinds of special programs and the nature of the clubs (career clubs, subject matter clubs) in which students had participated at school.

The Program Manager combined that information with personal judgment to try and match youth to appropriate jobs. For example, if an honors student aspired to a career in a clerical position, she would often try to place the student in a more challenging position and/or assign the student to a mentor whom she knew to be particularly strong and potentially influential.

The matching process was conducted in a busy period during the month prior to the beginning of the program. Lack of information on the skill levels of the students somewhat hampered the process. While most of the jobs were entry-level positions in interesting organizations, some did require certain skills. Conversely, some students had skills and interests that exceeded those required by the entry-level positions that were available.

The matching process was exacerbated further by two unanticipated factors. One week after the program began, staff in the voluntary hospitals of New York City went on strike. The program staff decided not to allow interns to cross the picket line for both safety and ideological reasons. Twenty-seven interns had to be reassigned. At that point, there were insufficient health-related placements in the "back-up" list, and some interns were placed in other settings like Con Edison. In addition, six students were reassigned during the early weeks because of "mismatching," dissatisfaction or personal problems.

Types of Jobs Assigned to the Youth

This section describes the types of organizations that provided placements to participants in Career Explorations '84 and the kinds of activities that participants performed in their summer jobs. The quality of the jobs and worksites was assessed using several criteria. First, low ratio of supervisor to youth was deemed positive since adequate supervision has proven critical for youth to learn good work habits in most settings. Second, we examined the degree to which jobs provided meaningful

work instead of make-work, using the following measures:

1) the supervisors' ratings of the work's importance to the organization;

2) the opportunity for the participants to gain varied experience in performing their tasks; and

3) the degree to which the intern was busy on the job.

Evidence from the survey of youth who completed the program, the survey of a sample of mentors and worksite supervisors, and observations at a sample of 15 worksites suggest that a majority of students had a high quality and varied work experience in interesting worksites. Career Explorations' staff reported that students were placed in a total of 67 organizations, including some providing direct health care, health-related agencies (including public and community health), organizations involved in health administration and research, social service agencies, and businesses (See Table 4-1).

Sixty-three percent of the youth were assigned to placements in organizations that were clearly health or science-related. Some of the remaining youth were in social service agencies that were dealing in part with health policy issues. Of the 27 percent in businesses and at Con Edison, an estimated one-half were in jobs that provided exposure and/or experience with computers or engineering. Therefore, it appears that more than three-quarters of the interns were placed in health and science-related occupations.

Students were assigned to these agencies either singly or in small groups. Only eight organizations placed five or more students, with the largest number at Con Edison (33) and the American Red Cross (23). Even in these agencies, the students were dispersed among different departments, allowing for a very low supervisor/intern ratio. Over 80 percent of the mentors and supervisors who responded to the survey reported that they worked

TABLE 4-1

STUDENT PLACEMENTS BY TYPE OF ORGANIZATION

Number and Types of Organization*	Number of Placements	Percent of Students
10 Hospitals	34	17
20 Health-related community agencies	68	35
4 Health administration and health research organizations	13	17
1 Hunter College science departments	10	6
11 Social service/community agencies	15	8
1 Dance company	1	—
10 Businesses and corporations (other than Con Edison)	21	11
Con Edison	33	16
	195	100%

(*Does not add up to 67 because some institutions provided placements in several units; each unit was counted separately).

with only one or two students.

As expected, most of the jobs in these agencies were largely clerical in nature, but interns reported carrying out a variety of other tasks as well. Table 4-2 displays the degree to which different activities were part of the work that interns performed. Most interns reported that at least some of their work (if not all) included typing, word processing or clerical work. However, at the same time, many reported that they did at least some of the following kinds of tasks: data entry/computer work (35 percent), laboratory work (22 percent), and health care or health aid work (24 percent). Thus, even though many were engaged in clerical work, they were also involved in other activities more relevant to the health sciences field or performing clerical work in health or science related agencies. P/PV's site visits confirmed this finding.

Youth reports correspond to the reports of mentors' and supervisors' descriptions of the tasks they assigned to the interns. The majority described the work as clerical or general office work, but among the tasks listed were: entering computer data, assisting in patient exams, maintaining medical records, serving as research lab technician, compiling statistics, attending community meetings on youth issues and conducting follow-up, computerizing constituent cases for a city council member, operating a telex, assisting engineering personnel, and assisting in an operating room. This contrasts very favorably with other summer employment programs that P/PV has evaluated, including those sponsored by the private sector. Like Career Explorations, all the other programs have half or more of the participants in clerical jobs; but in those programs, the remaining jobs tend to include maintenance, stocking shelves, and food handling, which was not typical of Career Explorations.

Job quality also appears to have been good. A high percentage of the youth reported that their jobs were varied (74

TABLE 4-2

FREQUENCY OF ACTIVITIES
INVOLVED IN THE JOB
(N=181)

Types of Job Activity	Percent of Youth Performing	Extent to which youth performed the activity: A Lot	Some	A Little	Not At All
	%	%	%	%	%
Typing/word processing	56	12	16	51	44
Data entry/ computer work	35	14	8	13	65
Other clerical work	76	39	23	14	24
Coding/research task	38	13	12	14	61
Recreation/ tutoring or caring for younger children	20	8	3	8	80
Laboratory assistant	22	8	3	11	78
Health care or health aid work	24	8	9	7	76

percent of those responding) and that they were usually busy (93 percent) (See Table 4-3). Further, many participants had the opportunity to work in unusual work settings that included large modern office buildings, neighborhood centers, a "floating hospital," traditional hospitals, and college laboratories. The worksites were also scattered around the city, and many students traveled long distances to reach their jobs. Since all were real working environments rather than projects specifically designed for summer youth employment (as is often the case in federally supported summer youth employment programs), it appears that participants gained some understanding of the demands of a real work setting, even where their individual work assignments were not completely satisfying.

Assessment of the Work Experience by Youth

As noted in the previous chapter, work experience was a major motivation for participation in the program. The quality of the jobs appears to have produced a high level of satisfaction; 82 percent of the youth rated the job as good or excellent, which compared well to other components (See Table 4-4). Furthermore, most reported that the job provided them with opportunities to gain new information and skills as the program intended. For the most part, the participants felt they gained knowledge and awareness of the work world and of varied careers, than specific skills (See Table 4-5). Participants rated highly the chance to learn about things done in the organization (good or excellent by 89 percent); to learn what it takes to be a success on the job (good or excellent by 80 percent); and to learn about possible careers (good or excellent by 77 percent). Rated lower were opportunities to learn new skills, do interesting work, or to learn about the career of their choice. But even on these dimensions, two-thirds to three-fourths rated the jobs as good or excellent.

However, as in all numerical distributions, we can employ the

TABLE 4-3

YOUTH RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS
ABOUT JOB VARIETY AND ACTIVITY
(N=181)

Degree to which job was seen as varied or routine	Percent
Mostly routine	26
About equally routine and varied	55
Mostly varied	19

Degree to which youth were busy at the job	Percent
Seldom busy	7
Usually busy	53
Always busy	40

TABLE 4-4

STUDENT RATING OF PROGRAM COMPONENTS
(N=181)

Program Component	Excellent %	Good %	Fair %	Poor %
Job	44	38	15	3
Mentors	51	30	13	6
Supervisors (if different from mentors	49	39	9	3
Monday seminars	24	42	26	8
Monday small group sessions	27	49	21	3

TABLE 4-5
HOW YOUTH RATED THEIR JOB ON A VARIETY OF DIMENSIONS
(N=181)

	Excellent %	Good %	Fair %	Poor %
Chance to learn about things done in the organization	59	30	9	2
Chance to meet new people	53	29	15	3
Chance to learn about what it takes to be a success on the job	45	35	12	8
Chance to learn about possible careers	43	34	15	8
Chance to learn new skills	47	28	19	6
Chance to do interesting work	37	36	19	8
Chance to learn about the career of my choice	33	33	19	15

"part empty" or "part full" perspective. Although the majority of participants rated the jobs highly, almost 20 percent did not. Some found the jobs to be boring, tedious, and in some cases not challenging enough. For some, the jobs did not provide the opportunities they expected to explore the career of their choice or to acquire new skills. This applied to some participants who were interested in health, science and technology careers, as well as to some who had other career interests. This was true despite the fact that the program staff had decided not to place all students in health, science, and technology placements if their interests definitely lay elsewhere. In the future, sufficient time and information must be provided to those charged with executing the job match to ensure appropriate placements.

Nonetheless, the majority of the youth were satisfied with their jobs, and some of the job matches succeeded well. In fact, on the questionnaire completed during the last week of the program, fifteen percent of the students noted that they had made arrangements to continue their jobs for pay, either for the rest of the summer, after school, or the following summer. According to the program staff, this number may have been even higher after the program ended.

Assessments by Mentors and Supervisors

Mentors and supervisors were asked to comment on both job quality and the performance of youth. Sixty-eight percent of those who responded to the mentor/supervisor survey felt that the work performed by youth was quite important. If the youth were not available, they said, it would have been a problem because they did not have the resources to hire others. An additional 12 percent claimed that the work was so important that if the interns were not available they would have had to hire others to do it. Thus, by these measures of "usefulness of the work," the job quality was quite high. About 20 percent felt that although the work was useful, they could have done without it or delayed

it.

Regarding youth performance on the job, 70 percent rated the performance of the youth as excellent and 29 percent as satisfactory; some supervisors claimed that the interns were such good workers that they set an example for the regular employees. Only one percent said that the performance of the youth was unsatisfactory, but a number commented on the low level of motivation or lack of aggressiveness or initiative on the part of some of the participants. Many supervisors commented that they would have liked more information about the youth before the onset of the program. Some felt that youth had been mismatched with their jobs and were not really as interested in the particular environment and career as the supervisor or mentor had anticipated.

Summary

Career Explorations succeeded in placing a high percentage of the program's participants in jobs of good quality, where youth gained work experience and opportunities to explore careers. In some cases the work that was performed by participants was more varied and meaningful than is usual given their ages and backgrounds. In about 20 percent of the cases, however, the program did not succeed in making as good a match between youth and jobs as some youth and mentors or work supervisors might have hoped. Nor did they succeed in placing all interns who were interested in placements where they would be exposed to health, science and technology careers, or other careers of their choice. Ambiguity about the importance of the health, science, and technology focus and its pertinence to the job placement component needs to be dealt with.

To strengthen the work component of Career Explorations, P/PV makes the following recommendations:

- Additional information about career interests and skills should be acquired from youth and about work specifications from job providers to help the matching of youth to jobs (and mentors). Further, this information needs to be obtained earlier to avoid some of the last minute problems of mismatch and misunderstanding. It would be very helpful if the Program Manager could include some personal interviewing of youth, particularly in cases where their career choices aren't clear.

- Program planners must clarify the degree to which the health, science, and technology focus is a program priority and whether it is a criterion for all the job placements. If it becomes a criterion, then youth should know that jobs will be in those types of organizations even if they have other career interests. If the program planners choose to allow jobs in unrelated areas, then they must consider the following: be clearer that the program is interested in encouraging health, science, and technology careers, but that assistance pursuing other interests is provided; or emphasize that the overall goal is to encourage health, science, and technology even if the jobs are not provided in those areas.

Chapter Five: Support to Youth by Mentors and Supervisors

A centerpiece of the Career Explorations program is the intern's assignment to a mentor. The concept of mentoring has become popular in recent years as a technique to provide constructive guidance to people in all walks of life. Recently, attempts have been made to apply the concept in programs serving minority and low-income youth, who have often had few successful role models from similar ethnic or racial backgrounds. All of the originators of the Career Explorations program, particularly the Presidents of The Commonwealth Fund and The Coalition of 100 Black Women, were strongly committed to the concept of mentoring and wanted to see mentoring relationships take place in a variety of settings.

The concept of mentoring has been conceived and implemented in different ways for different programs. For example, in Project Redirection, a program for unmarried teen mothers, mentors were mothers from the same community as the teen mothers to whom they were being assigned. The relationship was fairly intense, and the mentor received a stipend for her involvement.

For Career Explorations, the concept was applied in a more classical way, as a "relationship between an experienced and dedicated adult and inexperienced, unfocused and evolving youth" (See, Mentor The President's Report, by Margaret E. Mahoney). The mentor, a volunteer, was to be someone who would serve as a positive role model for the intern. The mentor would be preferably from a similar ethnic or racial background and would have successfully achieved a career goal.

From the beginning, the mentoring concept posed difficult challenges for the Career Explorations program. As mentioned by President Mahoney in her report, to establish a mentor

relationship requires careful selection, training, matching, and, also, the elusive ingredients of "chemistry" and time. The limitations of the Career Explorations program, in terms of its brief start-up time, its six-week duration, and its small staff made implementing the concept extremely difficult. The sponsors' original hopes to foster lastings relationships between youth and mentors that would have a lasting impact on the youth exceeded the program's capacities.

The designated mentor was frequently the youth's job site supervisor. At some sites, the mentor assigned another person to serve as the day-to-day work supervisor. Past evaluations of Career Explorations found that some of the closeness originally expected between youth and mentor occurred instead between youth and job supervisor. Furthermore, youth also received guidance and influence from a third person, the Field Supervisor, a member of the program staff whose role will be described more fully in following chapters and who served in a mentor-like role.

What actually evolved in this program was a strong focus on adult/youth relationships in general. Most youth did establish a strong relationship with an adult in the program, but it occurred with any or all of the actors mentioned above, including the assigned mentor, worksite supervisor if different from mentor, or Field Supervisor. In just a few cases, the relationship did not develop beyond the required amount of work supervision.

As in previous years, the goal of the mentor component of Career Explorations '84 was that adults would provide assistance and support to youth in the following ways:

- by assisting them in learning about career options;
- by assisting them in thinking about and planning for their future;
- by helping them adjust in the workplace;

- by sharing with young participants their own career development and experiences;
- by being available for discussion of other problems.

This chapter describes the mentor and supervisor support to youth as implemented in the Career Explorations '84 program, including:

- the recruitment of mentors;
- the characteristics of the mentors and supervisors;
- the types of support that were provided to the youth by mentors and supervisors; and
- assessment of this portion of the program.

Recruitment of Mentors

The process of recruiting mentors changed somewhat in 1984 from the way it had been conducted in earlier years. In those years, the primary focus had been on locating a sympathetic adult in a responsible position, whose background was similar to the youth's and with whom the youth would feel comfortable.

During the first two years of the program, The Coalition of 100 Black Women provided a source of mentors. In agreeing to become a mentor for one or more interns during the six-week program, the person was also agreeing to supply job placements for them. Thus, the location of a capable mentor dictated the job placements.

With the shift in management and program focus in 1984, the Program Manager sought a new set of job placements in health, science, and technology. The process of developing jobs for Career Explorations '84 included soliciting simultaneously an agreement from a person to be a mentor for the youth who would be

placed at the job site. Many of these people were accustomed to providing supervision and support to students placed in their agencies. However, many of those who agreed to participate were not members of the Coalition and were not familiar with the concept of mentoring as the program designers had originally envisioned it. The nature of the supervision and guidance that the program expected of them may have been different from that of their prior supervisory experience.

Although they did receive an explanation of the program's goals, it is not clear that new mentors were fully familiarized with the program's expectations of them. This was particularly true when the role combined the functions of a supervisor, who is primarily responsible for overseeing the quality of work, and of a mentor, whose role usually extends beyond the confines of work. One factor that was not communicated sufficiently, either this year or in the past, was the hope that mentors would continue their relationships with the youth after the summer ended.

According to program staff records, in 114 cases, the mentor was also the intern's work supervisor. In 81 additional cases, the mentor assigned a job supervisor to provide day-to-day supervision of the youth at work. For those worksites where there were no minority mentors or work supervisors, other members of the Coalition were enlisted as mentors. Consequently twenty mentors did not work at the same job site as the students to whom they were assigned. Fifteen of them were replacement mentors, assigned because the first was too busy or was of a different racial or ethnic group. In total, 165 mentor and supervisors were recruited. (This number is not the total of the numbers mentioned above because many mentors or supervisors worked with more than one intern).

Mentors and supervisors were sent written materials about the program and some literature on mentoring. The mentors were also invited to an orientation session a week before the program

began. Only about 40 were able to attend, and it devolved to the Field Supervisors, each of whom was responsible for 25 interns, to provide additional individualized orientation to the mentors and job supervisors. Even those mentors or supervisors who participated in the orientation needed additional information because the session was merely a general introduction to the program, and based on P/PV's observation, not very instructive about mentoring in particular.

Characteristics of Mentors and Supervisors

The mentors and supervisors came primarily from the 67 agencies, departments and corporations that offered student placements for the summer; the off-site mentors came from The Coalition of 100 Black Women. Information about their personal characteristics and their roles in the program was obtained from a questionnaire that was administered at the final awards ceremony. Since not all of the mentors were present, questionnaires were mailed to the remainder, yielding a total of 97 responses.

The conclusions drawn from the questionnaires may be somewhat skewed by the response bias of a self-selected sample and by the composition of the group attending the awards ceremony. A number of those who had worked directly with the students were unable to attend. Other businesses that employed interns, such as Con Edison, were overrepresented because the company sent almost all personnel who were involved with the program as a public relations gesture. However, despite limitations on generalizing from its conclusions, the questionnaire revealed some useful information on the characteristics and behavior of a sample of mentors and supervisors.

Two-thirds of the mentors and supervisors responding to the questionnaire were female, as were two-thirds of the interns. Other demographic characteristics were less closely matched (See

Table 5-1). Seventy-five percent (75%) of the students were black, compared to thirty-eight percent (38%) of the mentors and supervisors. Forty-five percent (45%) of the mentors and supervisors, as compared to two percent (2%) of the students, were white. The percentage of Hispanic students, mentors and supervisors (13%) was the same.

Half of the mentors were between the ages of 30 and 39, and another quarter between 40 and 49. Most of them held positions at a middle management level. Just under half of them (46%) had held their positions for more than five years, and an additional 37 percent between one and five years.

As can be seen in Table 5-1, most mentors had sufficient experience and seniority to provide useful guidance, but were not so old as to be totally out of touch with the youth. According to the questionnaire, most mentors did not view differences in ethnicity, sex, or age as a problem in their relationship with the youth. Seventy-one percent of the mentors and supervisors indicated that they volunteered to serve in those roles. The others were assigned the role by their own supervisors.

Because of the changes in program focus and worksite placements, only a few of those who volunteered had been involved in the program in the past. Others were affiliated with The Coalition of 100 Black Women; and some had simply read or heard about the program. Not surprisingly, 60 percent of the respondents had previously supervised youth on a job, and 73 percent had worked with or counseled youth outside of work; nonetheless, many of these new recruits did not understand the full implications of their role in Career Explorations until they were well into the program.

Support to Youth by Mentors and Supervisors

A primary purpose of this evaluation is to learn more about

TABLE 5-1

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF MENTOR AND/OR SUPERVISORS
(N=97)

Sex	Percent
Male	35
Female	65
Ethnicity	
White	45
Black	38
Hispanic	13
Other	4
Age	
20-29	14
30-39	50
40-49	27
50 +	9
Length of time in current job	
Less than 33 months	2
Between 3 months and one year	15
Between one and five years	37
More than 5 years	46

the kinds of support that mentors and supervisors provide to the youth. Given the ways in which the mentor and supervisor roles were distributed, it is also useful to examine whether there is a distinction between the way mentors and work supervisors relate to the youth. Findings from the evaluations of previous years' programs, corroborated by the perceptions of staff, were that the roles were often indistinguishable and that work supervisors were just as likely to provide guidance and motivational support as those designated as mentors.

For this evaluation, questions were asked on both the youth survey and the mentor/supervisor survey about the kinds of roles mentors and supervisors played, the frequency of contact, and the kinds of interactions that took place. One problem of this analysis was that the youth who responded to the questionnaire had difficulty distinguishing between who was a "mentor" and who was a "supervisor." Indeed, the two roles do not seem to be clearly distinguishable, either to the youth or even to those filling them.

For example, as mentioned, program documents indicate earlier that for 114 interns the mentor and supervisor were the same person, and for 81 interns there was a supervisor and a separate mentor. Thus, almost two-thirds of the interns had a mentor and worksite supervisor who were the same person. Yet, when youth were asked on the survey if the mentor and worksite supervisor were the same person, the responses were reversed. Only 32 percent reported that they were the same person, and 68 percent responded that they were not.

There are several possible explanations for this. First, there may have been more than one person at the worksite who at one time or another acted as worksite supervisor. Second, youth may have misinterpreted the title "worksite supervisor" to mean the Field Supervisor from the Career Explorations staff. This raises some questions about the meaning of the responses as we

try to compare the roles of mentors and supervisors. On the other hand, the youths' confusion about who served in what role and the differences in their perceptions and the records of staff, indicates that the people who actually gave them the most guidance were not necessarily those originally designated for the mentor's role. The youth perceived that certain adults served in either or both capacities, and they described their interactions with these adults accordingly. With this caveat in mind, the next section presents findings on what youth perceived the people they referred to as "mentor" and the people they referred to as "supervisors" to be doing.

Perception of Youth

From the youths' perspective, mentors and supervisors undertook a variety of roles and discussed a variety of topics with them. Table 5-2 lists a number of activities and the percentage of interns who indicated that their mentors and/or supervisors engaged in these activities.

Three-quarters of the interns reported having discussions with supervisors and/or mentors about their work and about educational and career plans. The adults also appeared to share a great deal of information about the types of work done within the organization in which they were working. Personal problems were discussed the least, followed by discussion of behavior problems at work, and of the background of the supervisor or mentor.

Of the youths reporting that they received some support from mentors and supervisors in the categories noted above, there are differences in reporting if one person was perceived as serving in both the supervisor and mentor roles, or if he or she was perceived as serving only one of those roles. Furthermore, when the youth indicated that the mentor's and supervisor's roles were held by two different people, the support was sometimes provided

TABLE 5-2

PERCENT OF YOUTH REPORTING ACTIVITIES ENGAGED IN BY MENTORS AND/OR SUPERVISORS (N=181)

Activity	Percent*
Explain rules	94
Introduce youth to others	93
Provide training	80
Talk about educational plans	85
Talk about his/her (supervisor/ mentor) background	74
Talk about students future career plans	85
Talk about how to behave at work	73
Talk about the quality of the work	86
Talk about the kinds of things done by the organization	85
Talk about students' personal problems	30

*Does not add up to 100% because youth could check more than one activity.

by one, sometimes by the other, or by both persons. (See Table 5-3).

In most cases, there is little difference in the types of support offered overall, when one person was perceived as serving in both the mentor's and supervisor's role, or if two people filled those roles and both provided the support. The most notable discrepancies occurred in cases where the youth perceived that the roles were held by two people, and each interacted with the youth on different topics. For example, youth reported that the person they perceived to be supervisor was more likely to be the only one to talk about work behavior and work quality, to discuss the types of services provided by the organization, and to provide training. Conversely, a youth named the person they perceived to be the mentor (who was not a work supervisor) more frequently as the only one to talk about educational plans, career plans and behavior at work. However, people in both roles were cited with similar frequency as the person to whom students talked about personal problems.

Perceptions of Mentors and Supervisors

Mentors and supervisors who responded to the questionnaire reported that they interacted with the interns with great frequency. Eighty-eight percent reported that the contact was at least several times a week, and many reported daily interaction (See Table 5-4). Frequent contact was reported by almost all who identified themselves as worksite supervisors, whether they considered themselves to be both supervisors and mentors or to be worksite supervisors only (i.e. 94 percent). Even 76 percent of those who said their role was mentor only reported contact with students several times a week or more.

Similar to the youth, mentors and supervisors reported that they interacted with interns on a variety of topics. Eighty-three percent of all mentors and supervisors reported that

TABLE 5-3

PERCENT OF YOUTH REPORTING DIFFERENCES IN ACTIVITIES ENGAGED IN BY MENTORS AND/OR SUPERVISORS (N=181)

Activity	Percent reporting activity engaged in by the following person's: Mentor and Supervisor Is Same Person	Mentor and Supervisor are Different Persons: Mentors	Mentor and Supervisor are Different Persons: Supervisors	Mentor and Supervisor are Different Persons: Both Persons
	%	%	%	%
Explain rules (N=171)	29	17	25	39
Introduce you to others (N=169)	30	12	32	26
Provide training (N=145)	27	16	35	22
Talk to you about your educational plans (N=154)	27	25	21	27
Talk to you about his/her background (N=134)	22	23	24	32
Talk to you about your future career plans (N=154)	28	23	19	30
Talk to you about how to behave at work (N=132)	24	19	20	37
Talk with you about the quality of your work (N=156)	29	16	27	28
Talk to you about the type of things done by the organization (N=154)	29	15	24	31
Talk with you about your personal problems (N=68)	18	34	31	18

TABLE 5-4

FREQUENCY OF MENTOR'S AND/OR SUPERVISOR'S REPORTS OF INTERACTION WITH YOUTH (N=97)

	All Respondents	Persons Who Are Mentors Only	Persons Who Are Supervisors Only	Persons Who Served In Both Roles
	%	%	%	%
Self report of mentors/ supervisors on frequency of interaction with the youth.				
Less than once a week	7	16	6	3
Once a week	5	8	3	3
Several times a week	22	28	24	14
Daily	44	32	59	40
Daily and all day long	22	16	9	40
	100%	100%	100%	100%

their most frequent interaction with youth concerned the job or job performance. (See Table 5-5). Seventy-five percent reported frequent or occasional conversations about the students' future educational or training plans; 71 percent discussed future career and work prospects; and 70 percent shared insights about what it takes to be successful on the job. They reported less frequent conversation with the youth about their own ideas and values (66 percent).

Those who identified themselves as mentors only discussed job performance less frequently than those who were both mentors and supervisors or just supervisors. Most revealing is the fact that those who perceived their role to be that of both mentor and supervisor more frequently indicated that they shared insights about what it takes to be a success on the job, about career and educational plans, and about their own ideas and values.

Overall, adults serving as mentors or supervisors performed a variety of roles. Evidence suggests that the supervisors and mentors took their responsibility to support youth seriously: only 12 percent of the participants responded that they were not receiving enough attention or supervision.

Assessment of the Mentor Component

This section provides an assessment of the mentoring component of the program. The assessment is based on information provided by youth, by mentors or supervisors themselves, and by our own observations.

Interns gave their mentors and/or supervisors very high ratings compared to other program components. Eighty-one percent rated their mentor good or excellent; mentors had the highest percentage of "excellent" ratings. (See Table 5-6.) However, benefits from the relationship with mentors are difficult to document. Some interns wrote in their journals about their

TABLE 5-5

MENTORS AND SUPERVISORS' REPORTS OF CONTENT OF INTERACTIONS WITH YOUTH AND THEIR FREQUENCY (N=97)

Content of Interactions	Frequently %	Occasionally %	Once or twice %	Not at all %
Job performance	48	35	17	-
Future education and training plans	34	41	23	1
Future career and work prospects	26	45	28	-
Insights about what it takes to be a success on the job	38	32	24	5
Ideas and values	31	35	26	8

TABLE 5-6

STUDENT RATINGS OF PROGRAM COMPONENTS
(N=181)

Program Component	Excellent %	Good %	Fair %	Poor %
Job	44	38	15	3
Mentor	51	30	13	6
Supervisor (if different from mentor)	49	39	9	3
Monday seminars	24	42	26	8
Monday small group sessions	27	49	21	3
Field Supervisor	62	30	8	-

appreciation for the assistance they were getting from mentors. Some got special attention from their mentors, like the interns who were taken to their first Broadway show. When members of the P/PV research team visited a sample of worksites, many mentors or supervisors talked about their relationships with the interns in ways that were qualitatively different from typical supervisory relationships in summer youth employment programs.

Forty-eight percent of the mentors and supervisors who responded to the survey say that they plan to maintain contact with the youth, and an additional 36 percent are "not sure." Some had already made specific arrangements to keep in touch with the students after the summer. However, when asked to provide details about plans for future contact, some expressed a passive willingness, such as "I told them that I am available if they want to call." There is no way to predict how many of the relationships will continue.

Many of the mentors and supervisors also asserted that they benefited from participation in Career Explorations, that they learned from the experience or from their relationship with the students. For example, some felt that their contact with Career Explorations students taught them to appreciate teenagers more. They felt that they had gained a new respect for young people. Others liked developing their own guidance and supervisory skills, and most expressed personal pleasure in assisting young people.

About 20 percent of the mentors and supervisors felt that they had not been given sufficient information about the program. Others indicated that they would have liked more information about the interns when they were being assigned. Some commented that they did not have as much time to spend with the youth as the program requested or as they would have liked. Some supervisors regretted that they did not always have enough interesting work for the interns to do. A few commented that

they did not think the interns were well matched to the job. Despite the criticisms, their satisfaction and interest in the program was high. Ninety-six percent responded that they would like to be mentors or supervisors in Career Explorations again, although some qualified it with the comment "if I have the time." This is a useful caveat, because it recognizes that the job does require a commitment of time.

Summary and Reflections

A focus on youth and the provision of adult support to youth is a major strength of Career Explorations, but this has been provided by a variety of adults and in a variety of ways. The developers and managers of the program conceived of a "mentoring" role that sets Career Explorations apart from most summer youth internship programs. But the program has not succeeded in implementing the concept in the way it originally intended. So vague is the concept that, as noted earlier, both the participants and the adults themselves had difficulty distinguishing between mentors and other supervisors.

This may be due in part to the program's focus on the work experience and in part to the difficulty of establishing both a "supervisory" role and a "role model." What has evolved is a very strong emphasis on providing adult support to youth. Career Explorations interns get a lot of attention on a variety of topics and from a variety of sources, including program staff, work supervisors, mentors and others who come in and out of the program in the Monday educational seminars. Given the limitations of the program and its short duration, the fact that several adults interact with the youth may be a good thing. Some people who volunteer to be mentors have less time for the program than they anticipated. Others simply do not work out in that role. The fact that several adults provide support to youth is a "safety valve," ensuring that all youth get some attention and some youth get a lot of attention, and that their need for

guidance is met.

However, the relationships do not appear to endure very much past the summer, which may not be long enough to have a real influence. If Career Explorations is intent on refining the concept of "mentoring" and actually implementing it, several steps must be taken. Among these are:

1) Define the behaviors that are expected of mentors more clearly.

2) Provide more orientation and training to mentors.

3) Do not be as concerned about matching mentors and interns of the same race or ethnicity; more important is availability for frequent contact and the mentor's goodwill and interest.

4) Encourage the relationship to continue beyond the summer to increase the chance of lasting impact on the youth. Otherwise, do not expect more influence than can occur in a six-week program.

Chapter Six: The Educational Component

Career Explorations seeks to expand the awareness of its participants about career options, influence their educational aspirations, and provide them with the information and assistance they need to clarify and then pursue their goals. One of the strategies used to achieve this are weekly educational seminars and small group sessions led by a Field Supervisor from the Career Explorations staff. This chapter describes the educational component of the program, and includes sections on:

- the objectives, design, and implementation of the educational component;
- the role of the Field Supervisor in small group sessions;
- the degree to which the component achieved its goals; and
- a summary and assessment of the educational component.

The Objectives and Design of the Educational Component

The educational component was designed to do the following:

- increase knowledge about health, science, and technology careers, including their educational requirements;
- increase awareness of health issues, particularly as they pertain to minority groups;
- increase awareness of educational opportunities and how to pursue them; and
- increase job search skills;

To achieve these objectives, Career Explorations planned a series of weekly seminars. Each Monday, the interns gathered at

Hunter College School of Health Sciences for a half-day session, at which presentations were made to the entire group on a variety of topics. Small group sessions led by the Field Supervisors followed each presentation and permitted discussion of the topics.

In the '84 program, the educational seminars represented both a continuation and a modification of the earlier curriculum. The program continued to provide information on colleges, financial aid, and job search skills such as preparing a resume and interviewing. New this year was information on health, science, and technology careers and the emphasis on health concerns in minority communities. Core staff and members of The Coalition of 100 Black Women were involved in planning the program and recruiting speakers for the large group presentations. The implementation of the small group sessions was in the hands of the Field Supervisors.

Only four of the seminars touched on career and health topics, since the first session was a program orientation and the last, a luncheon and awards ceremony. The presentations included the following: a lecture on looking at colleges, workshops on health-related careers, a panel discussion on computers, and a panel discussion on health issues for young people.

The Role of the Field Supervisor in Small Group Sessions

Much of the educational component was implemented by the Field Supervisors, who led the weekly small group session in addition to their administrative and counseling responsibilities. As part of the small group sessions, they guided the youth in activities such as keeping a journal of their experiences in Career Explorations, writing resumes, learning interviewing skills, and completing financial aid forms.

A concerted attempt to make the Monday sessions as little

like school as possible included de-emphasizing the instructional aspects of the Field Supervisors' role. Field Supervisors also assisted the students in many other ways, such as advising youth facing problems at the worksite, intervening directly when appropriate. This was part of their role as liaisons between the program and the worksite supervisors and mentors. They also acted as counselors, sometimes as "friends," and were available to the youth to discuss various issues and concerns.

Youth Outcomes and Assessment of the Educational Component

In previous years, the educational component did not meet the program's expectation. In 1984, efforts were made to improve this aspect, but students were still less satisfied with the educational component than with their jobs or mentors. Similar to the previous year, 64 percent rated the Monday seminars good or excellent (only 24 percent gave an excellent rating). Members of the research team attended many of the educational seminars and observed that some were clearly better received than others. Students were particularly pleased with the session given by a Hunter professor on health issues for young people, responding to his dynamism as well as to the topic. Interns found some of the sessions long and boring, and many complained that the physical environment was uncomfortable. The layout of the rooms, the lack of air conditioning, and the format of the lectures all contributed to feelings of restlessness; the sessions were considered too much "like school."

Youth were more satisfied with the small group sessions, 76 percent rating them good or excellent. Their ratings of the Field Supervisors were even higher (See Table 6-1). Ninety percent considered them good or excellent at conducting the sessions, and 96 percent rated their availability to discuss special problems or issues as good to excellent.

But the youth's satisfaction with the educational component

TABLE 6-1

YOUTH RATINGS OF FIELD SUPERVISORS
(N=181)

Activity	Excellent %	Good %	Poor %
Conduct small group sessions	58	32	10
Discuss special problems or issues	68	28	4
Explain program procedures	64	33	3

is only one measure of its success. Another is whether they increased their knowledge about careers and whether they were influenced to change their career or educational plans.

Changes in knowledge. About three-quarters of the interns indicated on the questionnaire distributed at the end of the program that they had gained knowledge about career opportunities and about applying to colleges. However, the program did not succeed in substantially improving youths' knowledge about the educational requirements or salary potential of careers in health, science, and technology. According to responses to a set of questions asked at the beginning of the program, about half of the participants had no reasonable knowledge of the number of years of schooling required for certain careers, nor of the salary ranges of a variety of professions. They overestimated salaries for some of the allied health professions and underestimated those of physicians and dentists. Many interns gave different answers on the final questionnaire than they had given at the beginning, but approximately the same number gave unreasonable answers.

Youth were also asked whether they considered a variety of professions appropriate for both men and women. Most showed more sophistication in this area than they had about salaries and years of training. Even at the beginning of the program, a majority considered most of the professions appropriate for both men and women. However, a substantial number felt otherwise in two instances: nursing, which more than a third considered a woman's profession, and engineering, which slightly less than a third considered more appropriate for men. Men were also slightly favored as dentists and x-ray technicians.

At the end of the program, there was an increase in the number who felt that both men and women could be physicians, dentists, health educators, computer programmers, and engineers. This may reflect the interns' exposure to professionals at the

worksites and from the Career Explorations staff. Several of the mentors were female physicians; a female Field Supervisor aspired to become a dentist; and other women were health educators.

Changes in plans. An unusually large percentage of youth (82 percent) reported that they had changed their career plans as a result of the program; few, however, offered any information as to what those changes were. Some cited a new interest in health technology careers, but others mentioned that their career interests have changed from a health career to a business or secretarial position. In our opinion, this may reflect the realization by some that their aspirations may have been unrealistic or an unwillingness to plan for what they considered too many years of additional schooling. Fewer participants (15 percent) claimed to have changed their educational plans. But an even greater number than in the beginning planned to continue their education full-time after high school.

Summary and Assessment

The educational component offers a variety of stimuli to youth but continues to be a problem for the program. It received the least positive satisfaction ratings by youth and fell short of achieving some of its short-term objectives as measured by tests of knowledge acquisition. The fact that youth expressed less enthusiasm about the seminars than they did about other features of the program is, of course, not surprising. They were not eager to be in a school environment during the summer; it was the work experience that attracted them to the program.

On the other hand, the seminars imparted a substantial amount of important information to the youth, much of which they may not use or appreciate immediately. Given the weakness of the guidance programs in the schools, this information may become more useful as the students apply for jobs and to colleges later in the year.

Several features of the educational component need to be improved:

- The program should clarify its objectives for the educational component. While they have increased general awareness among youth, specific learning gains are few. This may be all that can be reasonably expected in a six-week program.

- In planning presentations on careers, it would be preferable to include more than one topic in a morning's session. The heavy concentration on health careers in one session is a problem when more than half the participants are interested in other careers.

- The speakers' ability to relate to youth is important to the success of their presentation. Presenters should be chosen for their style as well as their substance.

- A participatory approach, rather than only lectures or presentations, might be more effective in engaging the interest and response of the interns.

- Field Supervisors need more guidance for conducting the small group sessions. Based on our observation, they were not equally capable, and some would have benefited from more supervision.

- Better use of the available space would improve the effectiveness of the educational component. The physical environment was not conducive to learning.

Chapter Seven: The Management of the Program

Previous chapters have focused extensively on the management of the program in terms of specific operations and program components. This chapter describes and assesses overall management of Career Explorations '84, including:

- o the hiring and training of staff;
- o the characteristics of program staff;
- o centralized administrative tasks;
- o the management of unanticipated events;
- o the costs of the program; and
- o summary assessment of program management.

Program Staffing

The Program Manager and the President of The Coalition of 100 Black Women were continuing actors in the program from the previous year, but additional staff had to be recruited and brought on board for the '84 effort. Staff recruitment was linked to the program's transfer to the School of Health Sciences and with that move, the appointment of the Chairperson of the Department of Community Health Education as Program Director. Although his position was budgeted for 20 days during the summer, his participation actually began in March. An adjunct faculty member served as a consultant during the spring to help in program planning and the staff training. These three -- the Program Manager, Program Director, and Program Consultant -- worked as a core staff to plan and implement the program.

The major staffing effort entailed recruiting eight Field Supervisors, who would be hired for an eight-week summer period. During the first year of the program, both professors and

graduate students served as Field Supervisors. Feedback from students indicated that the graduate students were more successful in the role because they related better to young people, acting less as teachers and more as counselors or older friends. Consequently, for both the '83 and '84 programs, all Field Supervisors were graduate students or recent recipients of graduate degrees.

The Field Supervisors were recruited by word-of-mouth and announcements in relevant departments in the college. The core staff sought individuals who had counseling experience and somewhat diverse academic backgrounds so that they could complement each other's areas of specialty. Of the eight who worked as Field Supervisors during the summer of '84, two were veterans from the previous year and two were graduate students in the School of Health Sciences. Only one was neither a veteran of the program nor a student in a Hunter College academic program.

Core staff of the program provided training and orientation to the Field Supervisors for seven working days prior to the opening day of the program. The training and preparation period was expanded from the previous year in response to the '83 evaluation. The training activities corresponded to the the roles the Field Supervisors were expected to perform, and included:

- information on the goals of the program, its history, and the overall role of Field Supervisors and other staff;
- information on their practical responsibilities, such as scheduling, collecting time sheets, delivering checks, and organizing and providing materials for the small group sessions they would conduct;
- orientation and training for counseling and trouble-shooting. Including sessions on the minority culture of the students and on group dynamics, this training was intended to facilitate the work of the Field Supervisors as a team and to improve their ability to work with students and mentors and

supervisors.

- o discussions of resources available to the Field Supervisors for the small group seminars; and
- o preparation time to review student applications and to make initial contacts with mentors and supervisors to inform them about their interns and to familiarize them with their roles.

Characteristics of Program Staff

The people who constituted the staff of Career Explorations '84 represented a unique group of individuals. Each had experiences and background relevant to the program, and each could serve as an appropriate role model for the youth. The Program Manager, a young minority female who graduated from Hunter College in 1982, came from a background similar to the participating youth; she had shared their educational experiences and personally felt the lack of appropriate guidance in her own high school. Strongly committed to the program and its goals, she showed both strength and warmth in dealing with the students.

Her skills and interests were well complemented by those of the Program Director, a non-minority male. While recruitment to Hunter College and promotion of interest in the health sciences were clearly stated priorities, he shared a strong commitment to the other program goals as well. His background in community service, community action, and health care for the disadvantaged were apparent in his dealings with the staff and youth, and the time he spent on the program was over and above the time he was paid for.

As noted earlier, the background and characteristics of the Field Supervisors were, by design, diverse. In total, five had backgrounds in health-related areas, and all eight had some counseling background or experience. Seven of the eight were female. Their ages varied from 23 to 35, averaging in the late 20's. The youngest was a recent college graduate, and the

oldest, a youthful mother of teenagers, who had recently returned to complete college. One was an elementary school teacher, who decided as part of this program to change careers herself. Three were black; two, Hispanic; one, Haitian; and two, white. As in the case of the mentors, there were fewer minority members among the Field Supervisors than among the youth participants. However, their personalities, styles, and experience, more than their ethnicity, seems to have influenced their ability to cope with the students and their problems.

Centralized Administrative Issues

Many summer youth programs have faltered because staff must gear up for an extensive effort in April, with little planning and virtually no continuity from the year before. The Career Explorations Project and Hunter College have attempted to solve this problem by creating a full-year position for the Program Manager, although during the school year she has administrative responsibilities at Hunter. While this is a step in the right direction, the fact that Hunter does not know until late March or April whether program funding will be continued limits the amount of advance planning that can be done. Several shortcomings of the program, including training of mentors and matching of students to jobs, have resulted from insufficient planning time.

A second problem facing the management staff is the issue of decentralization. Although the Program Manager is involved in all phases of program management, there are, as in any program, certain responsibilities that need to be delegated to others. While decentralizing some activities may be necessary, it is important to exercise more control from the top to assure that the objectives of the program are met. For example, three major parts of this program are in large part decentralized: the youth recruitment process; the conduct of the small group sessions; and the training, orientation, and liaison with mentors and worksite supervisors. Youth recruitment is handled within the schools,

and the other two functions are largely carried out by the Field Supervisors. As a result, not all the youth receive a clear explanation of the program's purpose, nor do they understand the importance of each component. The training given to Field Supervisors may not address this topic adequately.

The expectations of the youth and their receptivity to the program would be enhanced if there were some direct contact prior to the opening day of the program. The program also relies too heavily on Field Supervisors to serve as intermediaries with mentors and supervisors.

Management of Unanticipated Events

The project staff proved itself very capable of dealing with unanticipated events, an important quality in any staff but particularly for summer programs because of their short duration and multiple components. For example, despite an attempt to oversubscribe enrollment in the program by requesting extra applications from each school, only 166 students arrived on opening day. Although a few participants were simply unable to come the first day, there were additional slots needing to be filled quickly, and the Program Manager turned to contacts in the schools for further recruits. As noted earlier, through a massive effort of the staff, the program successfully reached its enrollment goal and 200 students were enrolled in the program by the second week.

Another unanticipated event that occurred during the second week of the program was the strike by service employees in voluntary hospitals in New York City. This affected 27 of the student placements and, as noted earlier, required a hurried reassignment to different work placements and mentors. Although it had an impact on how successfully youth were matched to jobs and on the number of interns who got jobs in the health science field, this problem was handled extremely well by program staff.

Program Costs

The direct costs of Career Explorations '84 were borne by The Commonwealth Fund ($138,000) and the Hunter College School of Health Sciences ($84,796). The Commonwealth Fund has been the primary source of funding during all three years of the program. $120,000 of its funds were earmarked for payment of student stipends, and $18,000 for administrative costs. (This included part of the Program Manager's salary and other administrative costs). Hunter College's contribution of $84,796 covered the cost of the Field Supervisors' salaries, the summer salaries of the Program Director and Program Consultant from the Hunter °College faculty, a portion of the Program Manager's salary, some support staff, materials, and other related expenses. Hunter College has assumed an increased share of the program costs each year (other than the student stipends) as The Commonwealth Fund has gradually reduced its contribution.

As in many programs of this type, in-kind contributions cover a significant portion of the costs and are essential to the program's operation. However, it is difficult to quantify the actual cost of these contributions. Organizations made the following in-kind contributions to Career Explorations:

1) The Coalition of 100 Black Women provided leads for worksites and mentors, including volunteer mentors for minority students whose on-site supervisors were not minority members. The Coalition also provided speakers for the Monday educational seminars;

2) The four high schools involved in the program organized and implemented the recruitment and student selection process at the schools;

3) The organizations/businesses provided jobs and supervision for the students. Although not required to pay wages of students working during the six-week program, they supplied the supervisors and mentors who took time from their own work to train and to meet with students throughout the summer;

4) Hunter College School of Health Sciences used its

existing network of contacts and its placement experience to locate appropriate worksites in health, science, and technology fields.

If we compute the cost per participant using the figure $102,996 ($222,996 total budget minus $120,000 in student stipends) and divide it by the 200 students, the program cost without stipend would be $514 per student. If we include the cost of the stipends, the cost per student becomes $1115. Clearly that amount is not a true or complete accounting of what it would cost to replicate the program. The benefits imparted by its location at Hunter, the participation of the Coalition members, and the cooperation of the high schools and businesses contributed to the program's operation in ways difficult to measure, but essential for its success.

Summary Assessment of the Management of the Program

Career Explorations is a manageable program. It serves a small cohort of youth relative to other summer youth programs, has a year-round manager, and at this point, reflects some elements of stability. Because of the program's complexity, it requires careful orchestration of sequential and overlapping tasks, and improved communication between core management and others involved in implementing the program. The Program Manager must also play a more active role in controlling several aspects of the program that have been decentralized. She should attempt to recruit mentors earlier and provide a more intensive orientation, including clearer expectations for the mentor role. Due in part to the exigencies of the funding process (The Commwealth Fund approves grants in October and April), the program has not been officially funded until April of each year. Consequently, many of the steps in the program management, particularly those involving recruitment and matching youth with jobs, get squeezed into a busy time period. This has hampered the management of the program which could be more effective and

better timed than it has been to date.

Chapter Eight: Conclusions and Implications

This chapter presents an overview and summary of the outcomes of the Career Explorations '84 Program, emphasizing the degree to which it did and did not achieve its objectives. It then describes the factors that contributed to the program's success and those that were weak and need improvement. This chapter includes recommendations for program improvement and identifies issues that need to be addressed if the program is to be replicated.

Career Explorations '84 is a program offering paid summer internships to 200 youth who have successfully completed their junior year in high school. It also provides adult support and guidance, and educational seminars a half-day a week at a college. A complex program, it is one that has multiple goals and objectives, which are at times ambiguous and shift in emphasis, creating some problems for implementation. Like many other summer programs, especially those limited in time and funding, Career Explorations proposes more ambitious outcomes than it can deliver in a short period.

Aiming high can be a good thing, though, and the Career Explorations staff and its funders are to be congratulated on many counts both for their aims and for their accomplishments. The program has achieved some, if not all, of its objectives, including the following:

1) It succeeded in serving the population it intended to serve. The youth who participated in the program were almost all minority group members and most were from low-income families. They had successfully completed their junior year in high school and a large percentage were intending to continue their education after graduation. Many, however, were uncertain about their career plans and so were eager to explore career options and gain

work experience. Their personal goals coincided well with the goals of the program.

2) The program had a high completion rate and generated a high level of youth satisfaction. Close to 97 percent of the youth attending, 195 of 202, completed the six-week program in 1984. This is a very high completion rate (although it reflects extensive replacements during the first week) compared to other programs and probably reflects both a high level of motivation among youth and the high quality of the program. Three interns dropped out for personal reasons, and two left because of discipline or behavior problems. Most of the youth rated all aspects of the program as good or excellent. Even those who had criticisms or who rated certain aspects as only fair or even poor put great value on the experience. Testimony to this is that 97 percent said that they would participate in Career Explorations '84 if they had to do it over again, and 98 percent said that they would recommend the program to a friend.

3) The quality of the work experience was high for the majority of youth. Most of the youth rated their jobs very highly and said that they considered the work experience to be a major benefit of the program. We found that most of the youth were assigned types of work that provided varied experiences and learning opportunities, and compared very favorably with typical summer youth jobs.

4) Evidence showed some promising gains for the participants, including increased awareness of career options, the work world, and educational opportunities. Overall, participants reported many gains from the program. Almost all responded that they received work experience and learned about work in general, as well as having earned money and met new people. About three-quarters of the students noted that they gained information about career opportunities and the process of applying to colleges.

5) Some youth reported considerations of alternative careers and changes in career and educational plans. A surprisingly large number of youth reported changing their career plans as a result of the program; however, few offered specific information about what those changes were. Few interns (15 percent) claimed to have changed their educational plans, but the number who planned to continue their education full-time after high school increased from the beginning to the end of the program.

6) There is evidence that many strong adult/youth relationships were formed. Overall, the participants in the program received a substantial amount of attention from a number of different adults. These included contact with mentors, worksite supervisors, Field Supervisors, and others on the program staff. Further, these adults, singly and in combination, interacted with the youth on a variety of topics, from those related directly to their jobs to personal issues. Youth rated highly satisfactory their relationships with their mentors or supervisors. Only 12 percent felt that they had not received sufficient attention.

Although these achievements are commendable, the program, as might be expected, did not meet all of its immediate goals. A high percentage of participants reported benefits from all of the program components, but some did not. For example:

1) Not all the jobs were satisfying, nor were all relevant to the program objectives of exposing youth to careers related to health, science, and technology;

2) A significant number of mentors did not provide the kind of attention to youth originally envisioned by the program designers; a few provided only the necessary amounts of supervision for the interns to perform adequately on the job;

3) Some of the career awareness objectives were not sufficiently achieved. Interns did not demonstrate significantly greater knowledge about the educational requirements or income potential of certain careers;

4) There is little available evidence that a large number of interns became more interested in health, science, or technology careers.

The next section describes some of the program's strengths -- factors that were considered most contributory to the program's achievements. This is followed by a description of factors that need bolstering and recommendations for their improvement.

Program Factors Contributing to Achievements

Committed staff and leadership. Essential to the success of Career Explorations has been the strength and commitment of its core staff and leaders. For the Program Manager in particular, Career Explorations has been more than a program; it has been a mission, one with which she has strongly identified, hoping to influence positively as many youth as the program could reach. Commitment to the program was also reflected in the time contributed by the Program Director and faculty consultant over and above their paid time. Despite the Program Director's primary commitment to the institutional goals of increasing Hunter's enrollment and attracting youth to health careers, he shared a strong motivation to serving youth and furthering their future aspirations in general. All the staff have thought carefully about ways to improve the program.

Identification with Hunter College and The Coalition of 100 Black Women. The program sponsorship has offered more than a host organization or an institutional setting for the program. It has provided legitimation, credibility, entry into many notable organizations for work placements, a network of mentors,

and willing volunteers to participate in educational seminars. Identification with reputable organizations is an essential feature of this kind of program. Thus, for example, even though the active participation of the Coalition has diminished, its involvement continues to be essential to the program's effectivess.

Focus on serving the needs of youth. One of the unique characteristics of Career Explorations is its focus on serving the needs of youth. Many programs which place youth in jobs consider employers their primary "clients"; others in which the youth perform service for the community view the community as their chief client. Career Explorations, however, is an example of a program primarily oriented to meeting the needs of youth -- their career and educational enhancement through all of the program's strategies. For example, when there was a conflict between a job supervisor's desire to have a tedious task performed for a long period of time and the intern's interest in increased learning opportunities on the job, the program staff became advocates for youth. This focus pervades the program and, as a driving force, is essential to its success.

Recognition of the importance of strong adult/youth relationships. Closely allied with the focus on meeting the needs of youth is another key feature of the program: the fostering of adult/youth relationships, whether through "mentoring", guidance, or quality supervision. The importance of this feature should not be underestimated, even though the mentor concept has not been implemented as the program designers envisioned. The emphasis on adult/youth relationships is a pervasive feature of the program and has provided benefits to youth by guiding them at work, imparting information, and offering difficult-to-define "enlightenment" in many areas.

Meeting the needs of participating organizations. Career Explorations has operated with the cooperation of many organi-

zations and individuals. Each has had its own goals, and the program has succeeded in offering each an opportunity to meet some of them. For example, Hunter College feels a responsibility to serve the community, but also wants to increase enrollment. Organizations providing job placements are willing to help youth, but also welcome workers at no direct cost to them. The high schools are eager to find jobs for their students and are willing to assist in the program's recruitment process. When organizations have their own needs met, they may be willing to make in-kind contributions as well. This mutuality of need is an important factor contributing to the success of a program like Career Explorations.

These strengths have been essential to the achievements of Career Explorations, but the program also has had some weaknesses which have hampered its effectiveness and which can be minimized.

Factors Needing Improvement

The mentor role is not well defined and is difficult to manage. While the mentor role is billed as a central strength of the program, it has not achieved its full potential. The role has not been well defined, and many mentors did not know what was expected of them. In many cases, mentors' roles were largely combined with the supervision of youth at work. The program managers and leaders may have put too much reliance on Field Supervisors to explain the program and the mentors' roles in it. Although Field Supervisors were able to communicate a need for quality supervision of youth at work, they had not been trained to communicate all the expectations and behaviors that the mentor role implies. To implement successfully the mentor relationship as a core feature of the program, program planners need to clarify their expectations and communicate them more directly to the mentors. Furthermore, additional incentives that would foster long-term relationships with youth should be considered.

Problems arise when matching youth to jobs. Previous evaluations have concluded that the matching process has not been as effective in Career Explorations as it could have been. This was a concern for the '84 program as well. In fact, the focus on health, science, and technology made the matching process even more complicated since not all youth were interested in pursuing careers in those fields. Matching youth to jobs according to their career interests, be they in health, science, technology, or other, is a real challenge, and better strategies should be developed to improve the match. Such strategies would depend on 1) obtaining better information from youth about their skills and interests and from employers about the specifics of available jobs, and 2) considering the feasibility of other techniques, including personal contact with students, if necessary, to improve the likelihood of a good match.

Mentors, supervisors, and youth demonstrate insufficient understanding of program goals. Evidence suggests that in many cases youth, mentors, and worksite supervisors did not have a clear understanding of the program's goals and expectations of them as participants. Some youth, for example, viewed the program merely as an opportunity for a summer job. Some mentors or supervisors saw the program as a chance to utilize subsidized workers, despite the program description they were given. In some cases, when mentors assigned other individuals to directly supervise the youth, they may not have transmitted sufficient information about the program's goals even if they themselves were well informed.

Both groups -- youth and adults -- would benefit from a more direct orientation to the program. In the case of the youth, an in-school presentation might be effective and provide a clearer indication of applicants' probability of participation. For the mentors, the solution is less simple. It is both a communications problem -- written and oral -- and a problem of obtaining commitments from mentors that they will try to fill the

role as envisioned. Some individuals possess their own intrinsic motivation to help young people, but the only concrete incentive the program has offered adults for participation thus far is a subsidized worker.

One possibility would be for the staff to oversubscribe the list of jobs and assign youth only to those sites where mentors provide a firm commitment to spend the kind and quality of time with the youth that the program expects. But, a point that must be considered is the possibility that the mentor role envisioned by the program designers may not be viable in the context of a summer jobs program.

Educational seminars do not sufficiently engage the youth. Core staff worked hard to improve the quality of the educational seminars in response to prior years' evaluations and to meet the new focus on health, science, and technology careers. However, the seminars still have not engaged the youth to the degree that they could. Although it is unreasonable to expect that youth will ever consider the seminars as popular as the jobs, there are ways of making the seminars more responsive and more helpful to youth. Speakers should be chosen more carefully, and interns given greater opportunity to participate in the sessions.

The goals and objectives of the program were not sufficiently clear. Many of the problems that have been faced by Career Explorations can be attributed to the ambiguity of the program's goals. Since the goals and priorities for each of the program strategies were not sufficiently clear, program staff encountered dilemmas in implementing them. For example, when matching youth with jobs, they faced the following issues: is providing a quality job more important than exposing the youth to health, science, and technology options? Is providing a job with good supervision more important than connecting the youth with an effective mentor, even if that mentor cannot provide a job? In planning educational seminars, is the intent to provide general

awareness or specific knowledge and skills?

These are only a few of the options that have not been clearly addressed and that have created confusion. Our role is not to provide specific answers to these questions. The intent here is to suggest that program leaders address these issues directly and provide focused responses.

Conclusions

Career Explorations is an enriched summer program for youth. It has gone far beyond most summer programs in recognizing that work experience alone is not sufficient to prepare young people for the future, either in the work world or in the pursuit of educational aspirations. It attempts to interweave a multiplicity of strategies, work experience, adult guidance, and educational seminars to provide support to youth. It has faced some problems in implementation and bears elements which can be improved, but the program's positive aspects far outweigh the problems. It is our assessment that the program is both worthy of continuation and worthy of replication. To facilitate replication of all or parts of the program, this report will be followed by a replication manual.